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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 USNATO 000060

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TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL READOUT - FEBRUARY 13, 2008

Classified By: CDA Richard G. Olson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C/NF) Summary from the NAC Meeting:

-- Afghanistan: Chairman of the Military Committee General Ray Henault briefed that ISAF is seeking to diversify its fuel supply away from reliance on Pakistani transit. SHAPE Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations MG Rudy Wright described a dramatic drop in violence in RC-East compared to last year and detailed the soon-to-be launched Operation SHAMSHIR. In a DVC brief from Kabul, acting NATO Senior Civilian Representative Ambassador Maurits Jochems laid the groundwork for the NAC's trip to Afghanistan this month. Ambassador Nuland clarified that the upcoming U.S. deployment of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit to Afghanistan will help give COMISAF the flexibility he needs to take the fight to the enemy in 2008.

-- Balkans: The SYG stressed the importance of monitoring the situation in Kosovo this weekend. SHAPE briefed on the potential new tasks for NATO following a resolution of Kosovo's status. Spain warned that NATO should not get ahead of either what CDI or the new constitution might contain, emphasized that any planning should not go beyond what the Ahtisaari Plan envisioned, and it should not be based on common funding. The UK stressed that while there is a need for caution, there is also a need to move ahead so NATO is in position to carry out any new tasks. The SYG announced a meeting of the NAC for Monday, February 18, and said that a draft public statement for that meeting would be circulated

for Allied views.

-- Africa: Ambassador Nuland informed the Council about President Bush's travel to Africa February 15-21.

-- Iraq: The SYG informed the NAC that the Iraqi Prime Minister will come to Brussels in mid-April. Ambassador Nuland praised the recent letter from the PM to the SYG that encourages the strengthening of the NATO-Iraq relationship and details further training Iraq would like NATO to provide.

The Ambassador urged her colleagues to be prepared to take a decision on the future role of the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) when NTM-I Commander Dubik briefs the NAC on February 26.

-- Statements on Political Subjects: The Spanish PermRep said that the OSCE plans to maintain its mission in Kosovo, however, the mission may operate under a different mandate than the one currently in force.

-- AOB: Ambassador Nuland informed PermReps about the expected re-entry into the atmosphere of a U.S. satellite, over which control has been lost, between February 16 and March 8.

END SUMMARY.

Afghanistan

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12. (C/NF) CMC Henault commented on logistical efforts to ensure ISAF remains supplied with fuel that meets NATO's quality standards, particularly aviation fuel. Although NATO currently relies heavily on fuel supply routes via Pakistan, new supply routes are being developed to ensure redundancy and preclude the possibility of a single point of failure. ISAF now gets 15 percent of its fuel from Russian and Turkmen companies, but aims to increase this to 50 percent by mid-2010.

13. (C/NF) In his operational brief, SHAPE DCOS for Operations MG Wright described reduced levels of activity by Opposing Militant Forces (OMF) pan-theater in January 2008. He highlighted a 30 percent drop in significant events in RC-East compared to January 2007)- this despite the fact that RC-East's operational tempo was up 300 percent. He highlighted a SHAPE analysis that illustrates 70 percent of all significant events in 2007 occurred in only 40 of Afghanistan's 398 districts)- noting further that only 6 percent of the Afghan population lives in these 40 districts. Operation SHAMSHIR, slated to replace Operation PAMIR as ISAF's theater-wide framework operation on March 1, will aim to focus on these districts, and continue ISAF efforts to separate the population from insurgents and extend the Afghan government's authority at all levels. MG Wright also stated that a convoy of 850 Afghan Poppy Eradication Force troops had deployed from Kabul to Helmand province to begin eradication operations in the March-April time frame.

14. (C/NF) MG Wright reported on the February 6 cease-fire between the Pakistani government and the Theriki-i-Taliban (TTB), noting the past failed history of such agreements, and reported that the TTB had offered an exchange of the recently kidnapped Pakistani ambassador to Afghanistan for Mansour Dadullah (aka Bakht Mohammad), who was recently captured by Pakistani forces. He stated that PRT Lashkar Gah was overseeing a gradual shift in Musa Qala from military to civilian oversight. He detailed a counterinsurgency success story in Kandahar where a tip-off on an IED placement led to an airstrike that killed some of the would-be bombers, and Canadian UAV surveillance led Afghan police to a house where survivors had taken shelter, which resulted in the arrest of ten more conspirators. Finally, he played a video that

demonstrated ISAF efforts to avoid civilian casualties, wherein a Dutch controller and a French Mirage pilot communicated to call off an airstrike due to the presence of civilians being used by the Taliban as human shields.

¶5. (C/NF) Acting Senior Civilian Representative Ambassador Maurits Jochems (dayjob: Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Operational Planning at NATO HQ), gave the NAC a well-received brief via DVC link from Kabul in advance of the NAC's upcoming trip to Afghanistan. Commenting on the February 5 - 6 JCMB meeting in Tokyo, Jochems pointed to some tension below the polite diplomatic surface of the meetings, noting veiled criticism by the international community of Afghan implementation and Afghan grumbling about international coordination and lack of opportunities for Afghans to take greater responsibility. Briefing the NAC before its trip later this month to Afghanistan, Jochems stated Karzai is "generally seen" as a problem by the

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international community and Afghans. He is seen as an indecisive man surrounded by bad advisors who compromises to try to maintain a political balance and nation build. Jochems called for more civilian mentoring support across all Afghan ministries. Second, he stated he has seen the need for better international coordination in his short time on the ground thus far, and noted the international community in Kabul was disappointed in the whole saga that resulted in Lord Ashdown withdrawing his candidacy for UN SRSG. Lastly, he shared some thoughts on issues Afghan interlocutors may raise with the NAC, to include FM Spanta's desire for the Afghan government to be consulted on NATO's Comprehensive Strategic Political Military Guidance to be developed for the Bucharest Summit.

¶6. (C/NF) The Danish PermRep asked for an "authoritative description" of the status of the ISAF CJSOR following the Vilnius Defense Ministerial and the U.S. announcement it was sending the 24 Marine Expeditionary Unit to RC-South this spring. Ambassador Nuland reminded the NAC that 1,000 of the 3,200 MEU soldiers would chop to CSTC-A for assistance in training police, and the remaining 2,200 would not formally fill missing CJSOR serials but instead would be under COMISAF's command to employ as he saw fit. She anticipated they would be primarily based in Kandahar, noting plans to re-open FOB Rhino near the Kandahar/Helmand border, and that they would be utilized in close coordination with the RC-South commander. CMC Henault supported the Ambassador's intervention and reminded Allies the U.S. forces would only stay until October 2008, after which time the issue of backfill would be "squarely in the laps of Allies." The SYG noted that it was a national decision to declare how forces would be used, but told the Danes he would seek a formal answer from SACEUR.

¶7. (C/NF) The Canadian PermRep thanked Poland and Belgium for their announced contributions of two helicopters and four F-16s, respectively, to RC-South. Noting the possible effects on the security situation in Afghanistan of the release of a controversial film on Islam by politician Geert Wilders, the Dutch PermRep shared his government's thoughts on the film and the state of Dutch planning for its release. (Comment: see numerous reports from Embassy The Hague for current status.)

¶8. (C/NF) Numerous Allies had questions in response to the Jochems brief. Spain asked for his thoughts on how to integrate better the NATO SCR office into ISAF HQ (Jochems demurred, noting that current cooperation was excellent). The UK asked about the status of the deployment of the EU police mission; Jochems stated that EU special representative Vedrell and EUPOL mission head Schultz were optimistic about the recent deployments to PRTs and anticipated expanding the mission to 300 personnel.

Balkans

19. (C/NF) The SYG stressed the importance of monitoring the international situation with regards to Kosovo over the

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weekend. The CMC reiterated that KFOR does have the necessary political guidance to maintain the safe and secure environment and the necessary forces with no caveats. He further noted an Italian infantry battalion from KFOR's operational reserve is currently deployed in Kosovo until March 4 and JFC Naples is looking to extend its deployment until March 18. General Porter and Mr. Frank Boland, Director of NATO's Force Planning Directorate, provided a briefing that covered all the aspects of the three new tasks as identified in the Ahtisaari plan that NATO could take on following CDI and a NAC decision. The new tasks would envisage the stand up of a Kosovo civilian ministry to oversee the new security forces, the stand down of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) with dignity, and the stand up of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF). They also touched upon funding and the potential requirements, but were careful to note that the Ahtisaari plan envisioned international donor funding for the majority of requirements, while NATO common funding would only provide enabling resources for the NATO personnel to carry out their tasks, a point re-emphasized later in the discussion in response to a Spanish inquiry. Lastly, the brief noted that once the NAC decided to carry out the new tasks a revision of the current operations plan would be required before the end of the 120-day transition period.

10. (C/NF) Spain commended the briefing, but warned that NATO should not get ahead of either what CDI or the new constitution might contain. The Spanish PermRep said NATO had the 120-day transition period to look over what type of laws might be passed by Pristina regarding its new security structures. The Spanish PermRep also emphasized that any planning regarding the role of the new structures should not go beyond what the Ahtisaari plan envisioned, mainly a small, light force with limited capabilities (civil order, EOD and de-mining, e.g.). Lastly he stressed the need for discretion, noting the sensitivity surrounding CDI in Allied capitals. Romania and Slovakia echoed Spain's points on caution and sensitivity. The UK pushed back on the Spanish, acknowledging a need for caution, but stressing there is also a need to move forward and not delay so that NATO is in position to carry out any new tasks and not be overtaken by events. Ambassador Nuland, who described the upcoming events as "historic and exciting," reemphasized NATO's commitment under UNSCR 1244 and echoed CMC's remarks that COMKFOR should have the confidence and flexibility to react to conditions on the ground. The SYG, in response to a U.S. inquiry regarding next steps, said that a meeting of the NAC is planned for Monday, February 18, and that a draft public statement for that meeting would be circulated for Allied views. The SYG also anticipated possibly making a brief statement calling for calm and reiterating KFOR safe and secure environment mandate on Sunday evening. COMKFOR would parallel this statement in Kosovo. He noted the importance of synchronization among NATO political and military authorities and between NATO and the EU.

Africa

11. (C/NF) Ambassador Nuland informed the Council about

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President Bush's travel to Africa February 15-21.

Iraq

¶12. (C/NF) The SYG reported that Iraqi PM al-Maliki will be in Brussels in mid-April. (USNATO has since learned that the PM will arrive in Belgium on April 16 and may address the NAC on April 17.) Ambassador Nuland expressed appreciation for the PM's letter of January 29, 2008 to the SYG, which encourages the strengthening of the NATO-Iraq relationship and details further training Iraq would like NATO to provide.

She cited the letter's specific list of potential areas of cooperation as the discussion framework for LTG Dubik's upcoming brief to the NAC. The Ambassador urged her colleagues to be prepared to take a decision on NTM-I political guidance while General Dubik is at NATO and to begin crafting the Bucharest deliverable on NTM-I.

Statements on Political Subjects

¶13. (C/NF) The Spanish PermRep related, on behalf of the OSCE Finnish Chairmanship, that the OSCE plans to maintain its mission in Kosovo. The possibility exists, however, for the mission to operate under a different mandate than the one currently in force.

AOB

¶14. (C/NF) Drawing on a cleared interagency document, Ambassador Nuland briefed on a U.S. satellite, over which control had been lost, that was anticipated to re-enter the earth's atmosphere around March 8, but possibly as early as February 16. Debris from the satellite, including a hazardous chemical, was expected to survive re-entry. She reassured the Council that the U.S. has a mitigation response team ready and will continue to update Allies as more information about the re-entry time and possible impact point becomes available.

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